(b) if so, the findings thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that these workers face many health hazards due to heating of bitumen smoke and dust on the roads;

(d) if so, whether medical facilities are extended to them;

(e) if not, what remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) to (c) No survey about the workers engaged in construction and repair of roads as such has been conducted. However, as per the Sample Survey conducted by the National Sample Survey Organization during 1999-2000, there are 1.76 crore workers employed in construction sector. The Government has enacted the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996 to regulate the conditions of work and provide health and safety measures for construction workers. The Rules framed under the Act have detailed provisions prescribing safety standards, welfare measures and medical facilities such as periodical medical examination occupational health services, arrangements with near by hospitals emergency medical services and maintaining ambulance vans etc.

Amendments in Labour Laws

2008. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently approved the amendments in various labour laws paving the way for the second generation of reforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Second National Labour Commission set up with the specific job to study and rationalise various labour laws in the organised sectors has been largely rendered irrelevant in view of Government's pre-emptive decisions ahead of the Commission's recommendations in the matter; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI MUNI LALL): (a) and (b) Review/updation of labour laws is a continuous process in order to bring them in tune with the prevailing situation and emerging needs of the economy. Taking into consideration the requirement of productivity, comperitiveness, employment generation and to update the provisions of labour laws, a need has been felt to make amendments in certain labour legislations and steps initiated accordingly. Thus amendments in Trade Unions Act, 1926 and the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 were recently carried out. A Group of Ministers on Labour Reforms has approved the amendment proposals in respect of Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and the Payment of Wages Act, 1936. The Bills to this effect after final decision of Government are likely to be introduced in the current Session of Parliament.

(c) and (d) The Government has set up the Second National Commission on Labour with a view to suggest rationalization of existing laws relating to labour in the organized sector, and evolve and umbrella legislation for ensuring a minimum level of protection to the worker in the unorganised sector. As the Commission has been set up with a view to undertake comprehensive review of labour laws, a few amendment proposals in certain legislations to meet emerging needs of the economy do not necessarily undermine the relevance of the Commission. The report of the Commission is expected by 15.04.2002.

Conditions on Closure of Industrial Units

2009. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Supreme Court has upheld, the Constitutional validity of an amendment provision in the Industrial Disputes Act (IDA) that imposes stringent condition on closure of industrial units and retrenchment of employees working there; and

(b) if so, what are Government's views on this and its impact on disinvestment plans?